

Office of Disciplinary Counsel

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

From: Andrea L. Rocanelli

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RE: COURT PRESENTS FREE SEMINAR ON DEATH PENALTY CASES

On behalf of the Delaware Supreme Court, the Office of Disciplinary Counsel is presenting a free seminar today addressing adjudication of capital cases in Delaware. Presentation of this seminar serves the interests of justice and demonstrates the Court's concern that Delaware deliver the best possible defense in these difficult cases, as well as the Court's efforts to avoid the substantial expense of re-trying capital cases after conviction and sentencing.

More than 270 people are expected to attend today's program, including more than 20 federal and state judicial officers, 60 members from the Attorney General's Office, and 60 members from the Public Defender's Office. In addition, one hundred lawyers in private practice are attending the seminar, demonstrating the Bar's commitment to Delaware lawyers' *pro bono publico* obligations. Also, several state legislators are attending, as are several members of the Office of Management and Budget.

The seminar will address numerous issues, including a discussion of vicarious trauma; application of the ABA Guidelines for Defense Counsel in Capital Cases; funding a multi-disciplinary defense; adjudicating state post-conviction and federal habeas corpus issues; assigning cases to defense counsel and concerns for case loads; the ethical challenges faced when client objectives conflict with defense counsel strategy; and an update on lethal injection cases.

In addition to presentations by members of the Delaware state and federal judiciary, other guest speakers include Robin Maher, Director of the ABA Death Penalty Representation Project; Michael Wiseman and Robert Dunham of the Capital Habeas Corpus Unit of the Federal Community Defender Office in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania who work on capital cases throughout the country and have assisted Delaware lawyers in the defense of capital cases; Judith L. Ritter, Professor of Law and Director of the Criminal Defense Clinic at Widener Law School, and Geoff Moulton, an Associate Professor of Law, both of whom teach and write in the areas of criminal law and criminal procedure; and Carol Tavani, MD, a board-certified neuropsychiatrist.

The program is being video-taped and will be made available, also free of charge, for those who were unable to attend today's program.

For further information, please call Andrea L. Rocanelli, Chief Disciplinary Counsel, at (302) 577-7042.